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ABSTRACT

A study investigated why single parents and displaced homemakers did not choose nontraditional careers more frequently. A survey was administered to 171 men and women in 7 locations in Kentucky who were enrolled in single parent/homemaker programs or in Job Training Partnership Act, vocational training, or associate degree programs. The six-part survey explored the image participants had of people who chose traditional versus nontraditional employment. It asked participants to rank reasons for choosing the job for which they were training and tested the strength of their preference for traditional careers. Participants were asked to name traditional-male and traditional-female jobs in response to questions, and employment and demographic information was collected. Female participants found a female who had chosen a female job more attractive, feminine, and high class. Interest and opportunity for advancement were the most important reasons females gave for choosing to train for traditional jobs. The average number of traditional-male jobs selected was 10.1 (out of 16) for males but 2.7 for females. Females thought female jobs would be more satisfying, interesting, and sex appropriate. Three reasons for choosing traditional careers were suggested: (1) traditional jobs were more interesting, made one more attractive, and were most appropriate; (2) women received misinformation; and (3) training for nontraditional jobs was unavailable. More counseling about nontraditional careers was recommended. (The instrument is appended.) (YLB)

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SP/H02

Single Parent / Homemaker Project

Final Report

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Purpose

When adult single parents and homemakers want to or need to make career choices, they often enroll in single parent/homemaker programs to receive the appropriate training. Usually the training they choose to receive is within the traditional career areas--even though, in many cases, a non-traditional career would be a more practical and beneficial choice. The purpose of this study was to learn why non-traditional careers are not more frequently chosen.

Method

Overview

To address this issue, a survey was designed and administered to171 men and women in seven different locations throughout the state of Kentucky. In some of these locations the survey participants were enrolled in specific single parent/homemaker programs, whereas in other locations the participants had single parent/homemaker status but were enrolled in JTPA, vocational training, or associate degree programs. All survey participation was voluntary and anonymous. After the data collection was completed, all responses were coded, entered into a computer, and analyzed statistically.

The Survey Intstrument

The survey administered was 10 pages long and had six different sections. (Please see Appendix.)

Part 1. One factor that may affect the career choices of single parents and homemakers is the image they have of people who choose tradtional versus non-traditional employment. For instance, women who work as

plumbers or auto mechanics may be viewed as unattractive, unsexy, and unfeminine. To test this assumption, the first section of the survey contained a 2 x 2 between-subjects experiment. Each participant read one of four different scenarios about a woman named Mary. The scenarios differed only in terms of Mary's occupation. Some subjects read that Mary was a secretary, whereas others read that she was a bank teller, auto mechanic or a factory worker. The actual scenario appears below:

> Mary is a 32-year old female who works as a secretary (or bank teller, etc.). She is divorced and lives in a white-frame house with her two children. Both Mary's children attend elementary school. In the afternoons, her sister looks after them until Mary comes home from work.
>
> In her spare time Mary likes to jog and to do other forms of exercise. She also likes to rent videos and to go for weekend drives. After an especially hard day at work, Mary enjoys taking a long hot shower or sitting on the porch and daydreaming.

After reading the scenario, subjects rated Mary on 12 biopolar scales, such as dumb/smart, weak/strong, etc. The endpoints of the scales were 1 and 7, with 1 being the most negative rating and 7 being the most positive. Of particular interest were the four scales unattractive/attractive, masculine/feminine, low-class/high-class, and sexually unappealing/sexually appealing. The other eight scales were included primarily as filler items, so that the purpose of this section would not be readily apparent. Also helpful in this regard, was the fact that the participants had no idea that there were four different versions of the scenario; as participants read and did ratings based on only one version, they were unaware that

the effect of job-type was being studied. It was predicted that Mary would be rated most highly by those who read that she had one of the two tradtional-female jobs (i.e., secretary or bank teller.)

Part 2. The second section of the survey approached the reasons for career choices more directly. Participants who were currently training, or who had recently trained, for a job were asked to rank seven reasons (in order of importance) for choosing that job. The seven reasons, as listed on the page, were as follows:

This job interested me more than any other.

This was the only job training was currently available for.

This job was the most appropriate for my sex.

This job would offer the most opportunity for advancement.

This was the job my counselor recommended.

This was the most glamourous job.

This was the job that would offer the most money.

A ranking of "1" was to be given to the most important reason, a ranking of "2" was to be given to the second most important reason and so on. Participants were also asked to indicate what job they were training for. The data analysis planned for this section included comparisons of the rankings made by males and females and by those who chose to train for traditional versus non-traditional jobs.

Part 3. The third section of the survey was designed to test strength of preference for traditional careers and to see whether preference strength was related to any of a number of different demographic characteristics. In this section, survey participants were presented with 16 job pairs and asked which job from each pair they would choose, providing that all their training would be paid for and that, upon completion of the training,

employment would be guaranteed. One member of each job pair was always one of four tradtional-female jobs (secretary, bank teller, receptionist, or hair dresser), and the other member was always one of four traditional-male jobs (auto mechanic, factory worker, plumber, or radio/tv repairer). All possible male/female job combinations were presented. For instance secretary was paired once with auto mechanic, once with factory worker, once with plumber, and once with radio/tv repairer. The same was true for the three other female jobs. For each participant, the number of female choices (out of 16) and the number of males choices (also out of 16) were calculated.

Part 4. The fourth section was designed to gain further understanding of the reasons for career choices by seeing if participants named a traditional-male or tradtional-female job in response to 18 questions. Participants were asked to answer the questions by naming one of the eight jobs featured in the previous section. The jobs were listed near the top of the page. The questions asked which job would be most (and least) satisfying, interesting, physically demanding, and sex-appropriate and which job would offer the most (and least) pay and opportunity for advancement. Other questions asked which job one would wear the nicest (and worst) clothes for, which job one's parents would most (and least) like him or her to have, and which job would make one most (and least) attractive to men. (As the survey was designed with primarily women in mind, the last questions were not really appropriate for the male participants. Those who inquired about the inappropriateness were offered the option of omitting them, and these questions were omitted from the analysis.)

Parts 5 and 6. The last two sections of the survey asked questions

about employment and demographics. Participants were asked in what kind of program they were (or had been) training; where the program was located; if they were employed now; and if so, what was their income from this job. Participants were also asked to indicate their sex, age, race, marital status, number of children, religion and educational level. In addition, they were asked to indicate their parents educational level, and what jobs their parents held, if any, while they were growing up. The purpose of these questions was to characterize the sample and to do sub-analyses and correlations on the questions asked in the other sections.

Pilot Test. To help develop and refine the questions for the final instrument, a pilot questionnaire was given to 27 students in two different classes at the Northern Kentucky University ReEntry Center. The results of this pilot test indicated whether certain lines of questioning were likely to lead to the expected results and whether specific questions needed to be reworded or reformated for improved clarity. For instance, in Part 1 of the original version of the questionnaire, respondents were asked to imagine someone who was a typical secretary (or bank teller, etc.) and to rate that person on a series of bipoloar scales. As it was discovered that many people had difficulty doing this, the specific scenario about Mary was created for the final version of the questionnaire. Also, in the original version of the questionnaire, respondents were asked to rank 13 reasons for not choosing to train for a particular job. The results indicated that this was too many reasons for people to rank and compare; most of the respondents either left this part out or did not follow the directions.

Pretesting of Stimulus Material. The eight jobs included in Parts 3 and 4 of the questionnaire were selected on the basis of pretesting. Nineteen students (with an average age of about 28) who were enrolled in an

introductory psychology course rated 24 occupations from 1 to 7 in terms of status. The four female and four male jobs chosen were selected because their average status rating were similar: 3.75 for the four female jobs and 3.75 for the four male jobs. This way, in Parts 4 and 5, if respondents chose a male over a female job, it would not be because it was necessarily a higher status job. To select activites for the scenario about Mary in Part 1 of the questionnaire, the same 19 students were also asked to rate 22 different activities from 1 to 7 in terms of whether they were traditionally male or female activites. The aim was not to have the other information in the scenario suggest that Mary was especially masculine or feminine. The activites chosen--jogging, exercising, renting videos, driving, taking showers, and daydreaming--were selected because their ratings were near 4.0, the midpoint of the scale, and showed little variation, meaning most students perceived them the same way.

The Participants.

To obtain the survey participants, directors of single parent/ homemaker programs around the state were contacted in the fall of 1988 and asked to complete a preliminary questionnaire about their programs and their program participants. In the spring of 1989, the coordinator of this project visited four of the locations--Ashland, Northern Kentucky, Hazard and Prestonsburg--and personally administered the surveys. Visits to three other locations--Henderson, Somerset, and Louisville--could not be arranged, so the project directors in those locations were asked to administer the questionnaires and were instructed how to do so. In all, 171 questionnaires were completed.

Results

Description of Sample

The survey participants were primarily female (89.5%) and almost entirely white (95.3%). Most were either Protestant (56.5%) or did not attend church at all (33.9%). Few were currently employed (23.4%). Table 1 shows breakdowns for these and other characteristics by sex.

Table 1

Sample Characteristics by Sex

	Males	Females
	18 (10.5%)	153 (89.5%)
Race		
Asian	0 (0.0)	1 (0.7)
Black	0 (0.0)	3 (2.0)
Hispanic	0 (0.0)	1 (0.7)
White	18 (100.0)	145 (94.8)
Other	0 (0.0)	3 (2.0)
Mean Age	24.2	32.8
Marital Status		
Never Married	13 (72.2)	35 (22.9)
Married	5 (27.8)	52 (34.0)
Widowed	0 (0.0)	4 (2.6)
Separated	0 (0.0)	23 (15.0)
Divorced	0 (0.0)	39 (25.5)

Table 1 Continued

Sample Characteristics by Sex

Mean Number of Children	.75	1.9
Current Religion		
Catholic	0 (0.0)	14 (9.3)
Protestant	5 (27.8)	90 (60.0)
Jewish	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Other	2 (11.1)	0 (0.0)
Do Not Attend	11 (61.1)	46 (30.7)
Location		
Ashland	8 (44.4)	33 (21.6)
Highland Heights (NKU)	1 (5.6)	28 (18.3)
Hazard	5 (27.8)	19 (12.4)
Prestonsburg	0 (0.0)	17 (11.1)
Henderson	1 (5.6)	7 (4.6)
Somerset	3 (16.7)	35 (22.9)
Louisville	0 (0.0)	14 (9.2)
Mean Education Level	13.3	12.5
Mean Mother's Education Level	11.0	10.2
Mean Father's Education Level	12.0	10.2
Currently Employed	7 (41.2)	32 (21.3)

Because the males and females who were sampled differed substantially on a number of dimensions (e.g., age, marital status), separate analyses were conducted for each sex. In some cases there were too few males for the analysis to be conducted. In other cases, the male responses, although few in number, provided an interesting basis of comparison.

Part 1 - The Experiment

There were not enough males in the experimental conditions (the different jobs) for a meaningful analysis, so the analysis of the data from Part 1 was done only for the female participants. Both a four-way analysis of variance (on the four different jobs) and a two-way anova (the female jobs versus the males jobs) produced the expected results: when Mary was described as a secretary or a bank teller, she was rated as significantly more attractive, feminine, high-class and sexually appealing than when she was described as an auto mechanic or a factory worker. Combined mean ratings for the two female jobs and for the two male jobs are presented in Table 2 along with the probability values. It can be seen that in every case the difference between the ratings is at least a half a scale point.

Although the other eight ratings done on Mary were done primarily as filler items, most of them produced results similar to the four ratings of interest. The two-way anova revealed signficant differences for all but two of the dimensions. These were weak/strong and boring/interesting; Mary was not seen as signficantly stronger or more interesting if she had one of the female jobs. Mary was, however, perceived as wealthier ($p < .007$) when she had one of the female jobs. This is interesting to note because, in reality, a person working as a secretary or bank teller would not necessarily be financially better off than a person working as an auto mechanic or a factory worker.

Table 2

Mean Ratings of Mary as a Function of Traditional Female Versus Male Employment

	Female Job (Secretary/ Bank Teller)	Male Job (Auto Mechanic/ Factory Worker)	p value
attractiveness	5.3	4.7	.0004
femininity	5.8	4.6	.0001
high class	4.7	4.1	.0002
sexually appealing	4.9	4.4	.005

Note: higher numbers indicate greater attractiveness, femininity, etc.

Part 2 - Reasons for Choosing Current Training

In Part 2 of the questionnaire, survey participants were first asked what job they were currently training for and were then asked to rank seven reasons for choosing that particular job. Originally it was planned to compare the rankings of males and females and of those who chose to train for traditional versus non-traditional jobs. This original plan could not be carried out for several reasons. First, as noted previously, there were only 18 male respondents. Secondly, only 123 of the respondents (11 males and 112 females) indicated that they were training for a job. Thirdly, almost all of those who indicated that they were training, said they were training for a traditional job. And finally, a number of the participants did the rankings incorrectly. For example, instead of assigning a different ranking to each reason, a person might have assigned two 1's, two 6's and three 7's.

The only subgroup with numbers meaningful enough to present (N-90) were females who were training for traditional females jobs. The rankings for this group are presented in Table 3. It can be seen that interest and opportunity for advancement were the most important reasons reported and that sex-appropriateness and glamour were the least important reasons. Among the jobs that females were most frequently training for were secretary, word processor, general clerical, and nurse; it can thus be assumed that the survey participants thought these were interesting jobs that would offer both opportunity for advancement and good pay.

It is unclear why so many of the survey participants (48) indicated that they were not currently training for a job. Although it is possible that they were not, as most were involved in Single Parent/Homemaker Programs, JTPA, vocational school, or associate degree programs, this seems

Table 3

The Reasons Females Reportedly Chose to Train for Traditional Jobs

1. This job interested me more than any others. (most important)
2. This job would offer the most opportunity for advancement.
3. This was the job that would offer the most money.
4. This was the only job training was currently available for.
5. This was the job my counselor recommended.
6. This job was the most appropriate for my sex.
7. This was the most glamourous job. (least important)

unlikely. What seems more likely is that many of the respondents interpretted the question as asking if they were currently training for a specific job rather than if they were currently receiving general training. For instance, one might be learning word-processing skills without having a particular job in mind.

Part 3 - 16 Male Versus Female Job Choices

In Part 3, survey participants were asked which of two jobs they would prefer from each of 16 job pairs. It will be recalled that one member of each pair was a tradtional-male job and one was a tradtional-female job (secretary versus factory worker, hairdresser versus plumber, etc.). For each sex, the number of male and the number of female choices (out of 16) was calculated. Strong sex differences resulted. The average number of traditional-male jobs selected was 10.1 for males but only 2.7 for females. Conversely, the average number of traditonal-female jobs selected was 5.9 for males and 13.3 for females. As the means would indicate, a large number of females selected the female job all 16 times!

Although correlations were computed between male and female choices and a number of other variables, only a couple of marginally significant relationships emerged. For females, the number of male choices was positively correlated with age ($r = .16$, $p < .06$) and number of children ($r = .21$, $p < .01$), and as would be expected, the number of female choices was negatively correlated with age ($r = .15$, $p < .08$) and number of children ($r = .20$, $p < .02$). In other words, the female participants who made the most male choices from the 16 pairs tended to be older and to have more children. Nevertheless, as the magnitudes of these correlations are very small, they are hardly worth noting.

There were no correlations between male and female choices and the

participants' reported religiosity, grades in school, educational level, or mother and father's education level. Further analyses, comparing the participants who made the most female choices with those who made the least, produced little of interest either. For males, the failure to find any significant relationships was probably partly due to the small sample. With only 18 males, it would have been hard for any but the strongest of relationships to emerge. For females, the failure to find many significant relationships was probably due to lack of variation in the data. As so many females chose all or almost all female jobs, the range of scores was quite truncated, making significant relationships nearly impossible to obtain.

Part 4 - Selections for "Most and Least" Questions

In Part 4, survey participants were asked to answer 18 questions by naming one of eight jobs, four of which were traditional-female jobs and four of which were traditional-male jobs. The questions asked which job they would find most and least satisfying, interesting, etc. Tables 4 and 5 show the top two selections for males and females, respectively, as well as the number of questions answered with one of the four female jobs. As there were only 18 male respondents and eight different jobs, the percentages for the individual jobs may not be very meaningful. The percentage of males answering questions with female jobs is more meaningful, however, and it provides an interesting point of comparison.

Once again, strong sex differences emerged as females thought the female jobs would be more satisfying, interesting, and sex appropriate. Females also differed from males in thinking that the female jobs would offer more opportunity for advancement and garner more family approval. Females and males agreed, however, that female jobs would pay less, be less physically demanding, and would require nicer clothing.

Table 4

Jobs Chosen by Females in Response to "Most (M) and Least (L)" Questions

Question Asked	Most Frequently Chosen Job	Next Most Chosen Job	% Choosing A Female Job
M Satisfying	Secretary	Receptionist	83.7
L Satisfying	Plumber	Factory Worker	21.6
M Interesting	Secretary	Bank Teller	70.4
L Interesting	Plumber	Factory Worker	18.4
M Phys. Demanding	Auto Mechanic	Factory Worker	5.2
L Phys. Demanding	Receptionist	Bank Teller	96.1
Nicest Clothes Worn	Secretary	(Bank/Rec. tied)	100.0
Worst Clothes Worn	Auto Mechanic	Plumber	1.3
M Pay	Plumber	Auto Mechanic	23.5
L Pay	Hairdresser	Factory Worker	66.0
M Desired by Family	Secretary	Bank Teller	92.5
L Desired by Family	Auto Mechanic	Plumber	8.1
M Sex-Appropriate	Secretary	Receptionist	98.0
L Sex-Appropriate	Auto Mechanic	Plumber	2.1
M Oppor. Advance.	Bank Teller	Secretary	84.0
L Oppor. Advance.	Hairdresser	Factory Worker	41.1
M Attractive to Men	Secretary	Receptionist	89.3
L Attractive to Men	Auto Mechanic	Plumber	9.4

Table 5

Jobs Chosen by Males in Response to "Most (M) and Least (L)" Questions

Question Asked	Most Frequently Chosen Job	Next Most Chosen Job	% Choosing A Female Job
M Satisfying	Bank Teller (Tie)	Auto Mechanic	41.2
L Satisfying	Hairdresser	(5 Jobs tied)	61.1
M Interesting	Radio/TV Repair	Bank Teller	38.9
L Interesting	Factory Worker	Hairdresser	44.4
M Phys. Demanding	Factory Worker	Auto Mechanic	5.6
L Phys. Demanding	Receptionist	(Bank., Hair. tied)	94.4
Nicest Clothes Worn	Receptionist	Bank Teller	94.4
Worst Clothes Worn	Auto Mechanic	(Fact., Plum. tied)	11.1
M Pay	Bank Teller (tie)	Plumber	38.9
L Pay	Secretary	(3 Jobs tied)	66.7
M Desired by Family	Bank Teller	(Plum., Rad. tied)	27.8
L Desired by Family	Hairdresser	(Fact., Plum. tied)	61.1
M Sex-Appropriate	Auto Mechanic	Factory Worker	11.8
L Sex-Appropriate	Hairdresser	Receptionist	94.1
M Oppor. Advance.	Bank Teller	Factory Worker	55.6
L Oppor. Advance.	Hairdresser	Radio/TV Repair	50.0
M Attractive to Men	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	-
L Attractive to Men	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	-

Interestingly, both males and females chose bank teller as the job offering the most opportunity for advancement.

Additional analyses found that married women were more likely ($p < .02$) than women in other marital categories to choose one of the four male jobs as most satisfying; that Catholic women were less likely ($p < .16$) than women in other religious categories to find a tradtional-male job satisfying; and that never-married women were less likely ($p < .002$) to think a traditional-male job would offer the most pay. As many analyses were done, it must be acknowledged that these findings could merely represent chance occurrences.

It must also be acknowledged that the results for Parts 3 and 4 could have been an artifact of the eight occupations chosen. As mentioned previously, the occupations were selected because they represented traditional male and female jobs and because the average status rating for the male and female jobs was the same. It is possible that, had different occupations been chosen, or had the occupations been equated on a dimension other than status, the results would not have come out the same. Although the fact that there were four different occupations for each sex argues against a biased set-up, it nevertheless, remains as a possibility.

Discussion

Possible Reasons for Choosing Traditional Careers

The purpose of this investigation was to learn why single parents and homemakers seeking job training usually elect to train for traditional rather than non-tradtional careers. The results suggest several possible reasons:

1. Traditional jobs are more interesting. Several results from the survey suggest that single parents and homemakers may simply find

tradtional jobs more interesting. First of all, women who had chosen to train for traditional jobs ranked interest as the number one reason for making that choice. Secondly, in Part 3, when participants were first asked to imagine their training paid for and a job guarenteed and were then asked to pick which job they would like to have from each of 16 pairs, almost all chose traditional over non-tradtional jobs. And finally, in Part 4, when paritipants were asked to indicate which of eight jobs interested them more, 70.45% of the females chose a traditional-female job. That tradtional jobs were regarded as more interesting is not particularly surprising given that they were most likely the jobs with which the participants were most familiar. For instance, most female participants had probably talked more with secretaries, receptionists and hairdressers than they had with auto mechanics, factory workers and plumbers.

2. Misinformation. Traditional jobs may also be preferred because of misinformation about financial opportunities and opportunities for advancement. In Part 1 of the survey, women perceived Mary to be significantly wealthier if she was a secretary or a bank teller than if she was a factory worker or an auto mechanic. In Part 4, although women chose auto mechanic and plumber as the jobs that would pay the most, they also chose factory worker as one of the jobs that would pay the least. Although some factory workers are undoubtedly poorly paid, most probably make more than the average secretary or receptionist. Also in Part 4 of the survey, 84% of the women chose one of the four female jobs as the one offering the most opportunity for advancement. As mentioned previously, bank teller was ranked by both sexes as first in this category. Although in some banks, tellers may be able to make they way up the ranks, often they do not get beyond their windows. It is interesting that

females ranked opportunity for advancement and money 2 and 3, respectively, as the reasons for choosing their current training, when in reality, there is some question as to whether the jobs they were training for--secretaries, word-processors, and nurses--would really offer these benefits.

3. Traditional Jobs Make One More Attractive. Although glamour was rated lowest among the seven reasons for training for a particular job, the results from the more indirect measure, the Mary experiment, suggest that it could still be a possibility. Participants who read that Mary was an auto mechanic or factory worker rated her as significantly less attractive, less sexy and less high class. This was true even though the only thing that differed about the description was the job; all other details remained the same. If the participants felt that someone else was less appealing because of a non-traditional job, they may feel the same way about themselves. Indeed, in Part 4, 89.3% of the female participants thought one of the female jobs would make them most attractive to men. Also, 100% of the females acknowledged that the nicest clothes would be worn for one of the female jobs.

4. Traditional Jobs Are Most Appropriate. In a similar vein, 98% of the females surveyed named one of the female jobs as the one that would be most appropriate for their sex. Most of them--92.5%--also thought their families would want them to have one of the female jobs. It should also be noted that Mary was rated as more feminine when she was described as having one of the two female jobs. Although females did not rank sex-appropriateness as an important reason in choosing to train for a tradtional job, it may have been affecting them without their knowing it.

5. Little Training for Non-Traditional Jobs is Available. Females

fourth-ranked reason for choosing to train for a tradtional job was that it was the only job for which training was available. The fact that so few of the female survey participants were training for non-traditional jobs supports the idea that not much training for these jobs, at least through the single parent/homemaker programs, is available around the state. If the training is not available, it is of course impossible for program participants to choose it.

Recommendations--What Can Be Done

If any or all of the above reasons are reasons for continuing to choose traditional careers, one solution seems fairly obvious: more counseling about non-traditional careers is needed. The inadequacy of non-traditional counseling is a program weakness that has been identified before. For example, in the Homemaker Follow-up Project, Karam (1988) stated that "as in state-wide findings, information regarding non-traditional employment overall received the lowest helpfulness ratings of all program components."

In providing information about non-traditional employment, counselors are faced with at least two dilemmas. The first is an ethical one: to what extent is it legitimate for counselors "to reshape youngster's aspirations and views of themselves (Gothfredson, 1981, p. 577)?" For instance, if a woman is truly more interested in a tradtional career, and if she would view herself more positively while employed in one, is it right to try to alter her opinion?

Resolving this dilemma leads to a second one: how does a counselor stimulate a client to explore broader career opportunities? Brooks (1988, pp. 226, 233-235) offers her Expectancy-Valence Model as a possible solution to this problem. This model has three components, the first of

which is expectancy. "Expectancy or belief of the individual is concerned with judgments of how well one can execute courses of action required to deal with prospective situations (Bandura, 1982, p. 122). The second component is the perceived structure of opportunity and the third component is concerned with the person's view of the degree to which her immediate environment or situation supports or puts constraints on attainment."

Brooks suggest that the Expectancy-Valence Model can be used as a guide for assessment and intervention. For example, the counselor can give the client a vocational card sort which includes both gender-typical, gender-atypical, and gender-neutral occupations that vary in prestige and educational level. The counselor can then have the client discuss the desirable and undesirable features of each position.

Questions posed in an expectancy assessment would include: "How difficult/easy do you think it might be for you to enter and succeed in this occupation? What would help or hinder? How would this occupation affect your attainment of other life roles you want for yourself? How would your family and friends feel about you if you pursued this occupation? Would they encourage or discourage you? Generally, how do you perceive the opportunities for women in this field?"

Further value assessment questions could be: "If you went into this occupation, what do you think your life at work would be like? At home? What would be the advantages/disadvantages of pursuing this alternative? This assessment procedure should help the counselor to identify the client's expectations (subjective probability of attainment) and values (beliefs about attaining desirable outcomes); perceptions regarding the source of perceived opportunities and constraints; range and flexibility

regarding sex-typed occupations and misconceptions or misinformation regarding requirements for entering and succeeding in certain occupations and/or incentives/disincentives that might be associated with particular options."

Following such an assessment interview, clients could be exposed to specific information about what a variety of jobs, both traditional and non-traditional, are really like. This information could be presented in a number of different ways: through lecture, guest speakers, films, and even field trips. To the extent that familiarity affects career interest, descriptive information could increase the appeal of non-traditional careers. For instance, because many women may have a stereotyped and limited view of factory workers, information given could emphasize that there are many different types of factories and many different jobs within them.

Films and videos could be especially helpful in reducing some of the negativity associatied with non-traditional jobs. Such media could provide an alternative image of women who have non-traditional careers. For example, pretty, feminine and sexy women could be shown doing a variety of non-tradtional jobs and yet sill having the approval of male friends and family members. Likewise, films could show some of the realities and limitations of tradtional jobs. Women working as secretaries and receptionists could be shown having few opportunities to move up in their companies or having insufficient funds to meet the needs of their families.

Although improved counseling will undoubtedly help to move more single parents and homemakers into non-traditional careers, it is not the only answer. An effort must also be made to make training for non-traditional jobs more available. If training for tradtional jobs is all that is offered, or if there is extreme pressure to keep numbers in

tradtional courses high, then single parents and homemakers will continue to choose training for exclusively traditional jobs.

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Appendix

SURVEY

Mary Bush / Coordinator
Single Parent / Homemaker Project

Northern Kentucky University

Spring 1989

Thank you for agreeing to complete this survey. Your answers will help us learn how people feel and why it is they feel that way.

You will be completing the survey anonymously; your name will not appear anywhere on it, and we will thus have no way of knowing whose survey is whose.

Please answer all the questions to the best of your ability. Many of the questions simply ask for your impressions or opinions; they have no "right" or "wrong" answers. The best answers for these items are ones that reflect your true feelings. Other questions do ask for actual information about your background. While answering these items, please try to be as accurate as possible.

Again, thanks for your participation.

Part 1

In this first section, you will read a brief description of a person and then answer some questions which appear on the following page. While reading the description, try to form a mental image of the individual described--just as you would if you were reading a novel or a story in a magazine. Here is the description.

Mary is a 32 year-old female who works as a bank teller. She is divorced and lives in a white-frame house with her two children. Both Mary's children attend elementary school. In the afternoons, her sister looks after them until Mary comes home from work.

In her spare time Mary likes to jog and to do other forms of exercise. She also likes to rent videos and to go for weekend drives. After an especially hard day at work, Mary enjoys taking a long hot shower or sitting on the porch and daydreaming.

On the next page you will find some questions to answer based on your impressions of the person described above. There are no "right" or "wrong" answers to these questions. Your answers will depend on the picture you created in your mind while reading the description. To answer the questions you will circle a number on a 7-point scale. Here is an example:

I think Mary is probably

1	2	3	4	5	6	7

dull **exciting**

If you think that Mary would probably be a very dull person, you would circle the "1" on the scale. On the other hand, if you think Mary would be a very exciting person, you would circle the "7." If you think Mary sounds like she would be about average on this dimension, mark "4." If you think she would be somewhat dull, but not extremely, mark "2" or "3." Likewise, if you think she would be somewhat exciting, but not extremely, mark "5" or "6." Again, all your responses should be based on your images and impressions.

Please turn to the next page now.

I think Mary is probably

1. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
mean nice

2. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
unattractive attractive

3. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
dumb smart

4. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
unfriendly friendly

5. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
masculine feminine

6. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
weak strong

7. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
low-class high-class

8. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
reckless careful

9. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
sexually unappealing sexually appealing

10. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
poor wealthy

11. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
boring interesting

12. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
dirty clean

Part 2

Are you currently training, or have you recently trained, for a job? **(Check one)**

_____ Yes, I've been training to be a _____
(Fill in job name)

_____ No

If you answered "No" to the question above, please go to the next page.

If you answered "Yes" to the question above, please answer the following question.

Why did you choose to train for this particular job rather than another job? Rank the seven reasons below in order of importance. Put a "1" by the most important reason, put a "2" by the second most important reason, and so on. Your least important reason for training for this particular job should have a "7" by it.

____ This job interested me more than any other.

____ This was the only job training was currently available for.

____ This job was the most appropriate for my sex.

____ This job would offer the most opportunity for advancement.

____ This was the job my counselor recommended.

____ This was the most glamourous job.

____ This was the job that would offer the most money.

Part 3

Imagine that all your training for a particular job would be paid for, and imagine that after your training was over, you would be guaranteed employment. For each of the following pairs of jobs, indicate which job you would prefer by drawing a circle around it. Be sure to circle one job in each pair.

1. Secretary	or	Auto Mechanic
2. Plumber		Hairdresser
3. Factory Worker		Bank Teller
4. Receptionist		Radio/TV Repairer
5. Hairdresser		Factory Worker
6. Bank Teller		Auto Mechanic
7. Radio/TV Repairer		Secretary
8. Plumber		Receptionist
9. Hairdresser		Auto Mechanic
10. Plumber		Secretary
11. Receptionist		Factory Worker
12. Bank Teller		Radio/TV Repairer
13. Auto Mechanic		Receptionist
14. Bank Teller		Plumber
15. Secretary		Factory Worker
16. Radio/TV Repairer		Hairdresser

Part 4

Please answer the following questions by writing one of the jobs listed below in each blank.

Bank Teller	**Auto-Mechanic**
Plumber	**Hairdresser**
Secretary	**Radio/TV Repairer**
Factory Worker	**Receptionist**

1. Which job do you think would be most satisfying? _____
2. Which job do you think would be least satisfying? _____
3. Which job do you think would be the most interesting? _____
4. Which job do you think would be the least interesting? _____
5. Which job would be the most physically demanding? _____
6. Which job would be the least physically demanding? _____
7. Which job would you wear the nicest clothes for? _____
8. Which job would you wear the worst clothes for? _____
9. Which job would pay the most? _____
10. Which job would pay the least? _____
11. Which job would your family most like you to have? _____
12. Which job would your family least like you to have? _____
13. Which job is most appropriate for your sex? _____
14. Which job is least appropriate for your sex? _____

These questions are continued on the next page.

Bank Teller	Auto-Mechanic
Plumber	Hairdresser
Secretary	Radio/TV Repairer
Factory Worker	Receptionist

15. Which job would offer most opportunity for advancement?

_____

16. Which job would offer least opportunity for advancement?

_____

17. Which job would make you the <u>most</u> attractive to men? _____

18. Which job would make you the <u>least</u> attractive to men? _____

Part 5 - Employment Information

If you are currently training (or if you have recently trained) for a particular job, what type of program do you (or did you) attend to receive this training. **(Check one)**

- ____ JTPA
- ____ Single Parent/Homemaker Program
- ____ Vocational School
- ____ Associate Degree Program
- ____ Other **(Please specify what this was** _____**)**

Where is this program located? **(Fill in the name of the school and the city or county in which it is located.)**

_____

_____

Are you employed now? **(Check one)**

- ____ No
- ____ Yes

If you answered yes, what is your current position? **(Fill in)**

_____

Is this a job that you are or were training for? **(Check one.)**

- ____ Yes
- ____ No

What is your income from this job? **(Check one)**

- ____ Less than $5,000 a year
- ____ $5,000 - $9,999 a year
- ____ $10,000 - $14,999 a year
- ____ $15,000 - $19,999 a year
- ____ $20,000 - $24,999 a year
- ____ $25,000 - $29,999 a year
- ____ $30,000 or more

Part 6 - Biographical Data

The following questions are asked for statistical purposes only. Please answer them as accurately as possible.

What is your sex? **(Check one)**

____ Male ____ Female

What was your age at your last birthday? **(Fill in)**

____

What is your current marital status? **(Check one)**

____ Have never been married
____ Married
____ Widowed
____ Separated
____ Divorced

How many children do you have? **(Fill in)**

____

What is your race? **(Check one)**

____ Asian
____ Black
____ Other **(Please indicate)** _____
____ Hispanic
____ White

While growing up, what type of church did you attend?

____ Catholic
____ Protestant (e.g., Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, Church of Christ)
____ Jewish
____ Other **(Please indicate)** _____
____ Did not attend

What type of church do you currently attend?

____ Catholic
____ Protestant (e.g., Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, Church of Christ)
____ Jewish
____ Other **(Please indicate)** _____
____ Do not attend

How religious would you say you are? **(Please indicate by circling a number on the scale below.)**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

not at all religious — very religious

How many years of formal education have you completed? **(Check one)**

____ Less than 8 (quit before 8th grade)
____ 8 (through 8th grade)
____ 9 (through 9th grade)
____ 10 (through 10th grade)
____ 11 (through 11th grade)
____ 12 (through 12th grade)
____ 13 (through 1 year of college or vocational training)
____ 14 (through 2 years of college or vocational training)
____ 15 or more

Do you have a G.E.D.?

____ Yes ____ No **(Check one)**

In junior high and/or high school, were you primarily a/an

____ A student **(Check one)**
____ B student
____ C student
____ D student
____ F student

How many years of formal education did your mother complete?
(Check one)

____ Less than 8 (quit before 8th grade)
____ 8 (through 8th grade)
____ 9 (through 9th grade)
____ 10 (through 10th grade)
____ 11 (through 11th grade)
____ 12 (through 12th grade)
____ 13 (through 1 year of college or vocational training)
____ 14 (through 2 years of college or vocational training)
____ 15 or more

Does your mother have a G.E.D.?

____ Yes ____ No **(Check one)**

How many years of formal education did your father complete?
(Check one)

____ Less than 8 (quit before 8th grade)
____ 8 (through 8th grade)
____ 9 (through 9th grade)
____ 10 (through 10th grade)
____ 11 (through 11th grade)
____ 12 (through 12th grade)
____ 13 (through 1 year of college or vocational training)
____ 14 (through 2 years of college or vocational training)
____ 15 or more

Does your father have a G.E.D.?

____ Yes ____ No **(Check one)**

While you were growing up, was your mother employed? **(Check one)**

____ No
____ Yes, she was a _____
(fill in mother's job)

While you were growing up, was your father employed? **(Check one)**

____ No
____ Yes, he was a _____
(fill in fathers's job)

Quarterly Progress Report

Single Parent Homemaker Project
(Type of Project)

Mary F. Bush
(Project Director)

ReEntry Center Northern Kentucky University
(Agency or Institution)

225 Albright Health Center
(Address)

Highland Heights, Kentucky 41076
(City, State, and Zip)

April 1, to June 30, 1989
(Reporting Period)

RATIONALE

Issues of primary concern in this research will be to determine the motivation for career choices made by single parents and homemakers. It will be directed at determining whether the choices that were made for traditional jobs originated from societal/parental pressures, the influence of role models, sex bias on the part of counselors and/or teachers, lack of information, availability of training or other more subtle influences. These issues will specifically be addressed in terms of traditional versus non-traditional career choices.

OBJECTIVES

To determine factors that effect career choices of women and men in single parent/homemaker programs.
To compare those factors with factors effecting other young women and men making career choices in vocational education.
Based on results from the above objectives, to offer a set of prescriptive tasks, and/or programs to assist more women and men entering non-traditional careers.

ACTIVITIES/ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The survey was conducted in person at Northern Kentucky University's ReEntry J.T.P.A. skill classes,and both J.T.P.A. and Vocational Education students were surveyed in Ashland, Hazard, Prestonburg, Somerset, Henderson and Louisville. Some difficulty was encountered in reaching a maximum of people due to the difficulty of scheduling mutual times when students would be available or when classes were in session. However since this survey was conducted on a direct personal basis a limited number was adequate since there was little or no room for error in filling out the survey.

It is interesting to note that location was not a major factor affecting the results of the survey. Women and men chose the traditional careers even in areas where diversified job availability was limited. Lack of knowledge and/or misinformation about various careers appears to be the most prominent factor involved in participants choice of career. Certainly environment and family roles are factors to be considered but skillful and in-depth counseling can rectify erroneous beliefs.

The final report based on the survey results is attached.